MINUTES OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING

Held at St. Columba’s on 7th February 2022 at 2.00pm

PRESENT: Fr. William, Deacon Lawrence, Pauline Rourke, Carol Galvin, Ann McCarthy & Nuala Keegan

The meeting opened with the Synod prayer led by Deacon Lawrence

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|  | **Action** |
| 1. | **Apologies.** Apologies were received from: Anne Mosquera, Amy O’Donnell, Lynsey Weightman, Eileen Irwin, Sue Carr, Peter Devine and Tim Moore. |  |
| 2. | **To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2022.**The minutes were received and accepted, with the amendment of the meeting venue on 14 February. This will now take place in the Parish Office at St Columba’s. |  |
| 3. | **Response by parishioners to the invitation to engage with the Synod.**Feedback was provided to the meeting by those members present.The following was noted:* Discussions in St C’s Hall after mass had been both thoughtful and fruitful
* An enthusiasm for participating in the discussions was evident
* Typical issues which emerged were the need to engage young people, the position of divorced and/or co-habiting couples, the role of women in the church and married priests.
* Similar responses had been forthcoming in discussions at St T.
* People needed more time to read and absorb the information over next few weeks
* Agreed to revise the “Journeying Together” sheet to focus on specific matters which had emerged in discussions. To re-issue this at next weekend’s masses
* Agreed to draft item for the newsletter to recognise the questions and comments emerging
 | Pauline, Nuala and Ann.Lawrence |
| 4. | **Feedback on address on “communion” delivered at Masses 5/6 February** Noted and agreed the following:* Address for week 2 had been well received.
* Fr William observed that in discussions with fellow priests our approach was well considered.
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| 5. |  **To consider publicity and processes to encourage parishioners’ responses.**Agreed the following:* Revised message to be included in each newsletter during February, taking account of ongoing discussions. Additional space and prominence be given to this message by temporarily removing some other information. Anne M. to be advised and her help sought
* “Ways to Engage “sheet to be revised to give greater prominence to the questions and comments being offered during discussions, under each core theme.
* The confirmation classes could present a way to engage young people. Anne to discuss with Denise Lusk
* All addresses to be uploaded to website after delivery.
* Fr James be requested to reconfigure website to provide a section for all Synod material to be available.
 | LawrenceLawrence, Anne M.Pauline, Nuala, AnnNualaAnnFr James |
| 6. | **To receive an update on collation of responses, submission to the Diocese and feedback to parishioners.**Noted the following:* Pauline had spoken to Barbara Davies regarded the submission to the Diocese. Barbara confirmed that the responses in whatever form they were assembled would be acceptable. However, if it were possible to collate responses under key themes that would be helpful.
* Barbara had been supportive of our approach and agreed that there were genuine opportunities to consult across the parish community.
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| 7. | **To consider arrangements for Holy Hour.**Noted and agreed the following:* Received a draft Order of Service which Lawrence had prepared.
* Agreed to rename the service as “Prayers for the Synod” and to move away from the traditional format for a Holy Hour.
* Considered a Lectio Divina model as suggested by Pauline. Support for this approach.
* The Readings suggested by Lawrence relate well to the key themes of the Synod
* Fr William supported the suggestion that hymns during Benediction should be in English, if possible. This to enable more people to actively participate. Ann to consider possible hymn choices
* Lawrence agreed to re-work the Order of Service to take account of these suggestions.
* Considered the numerous other commitments over the week commencing 21 February, including two confirmation Masses, a Deanery conference and a Clergy Day of Reflection.
* Considering this agreed to hold a single Synod service entitled “Prayers for the Synod” at St Columba’s on Monday 21 February at 6.30pm followed by tea and coffee in the Hall.
* Nuala to liaise with Sue Carr regarding the hall booking and provision of refreshments.
 | Fr William/ LawrenceLawrenceAnnNuala |
| 8. |  **Covid guidance and the role of stewards in church**Nuala reported on a series of incidents in which stewards at St Columba’s had been abused by parishioners. This had become very distressing, and one steward had resigned. Noted and agreed the following:* The Pastoral Council members were shocked and dismayed by these reports.
* Such behaviour was unacceptable and would not be tolerated
* Fr William would speak on the matter in church during the homily in the coming week
* Fr William would write to members of the stewarding team. Nuala to draft remarks for Fr William to send.
* New and more emphatic guidance be created for insertion in the newsletter, reinforcing expectations of compliance.
* New door notices be created regarding the wearing of face masks
* Stewards would not offer people hand sanitiser, but this would be available. Transmission of the virus by touch had been shown to be of lower significance than through aerosol transmission.
 | Fr William, NualaPaulineCarol |
|  9. | **Date of next meeting**There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.15 pm.Further meetings were scheduled as follows:* **Monday 14 February 2.00pm, Parish Office**
* **Monday 21 February 2.00pm, Newman Room**
* **Monday 28 February 2.00pm, Newman Room**
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The meeting concluded with a prayer led by Fr William.